

21 November 1958

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Meeting held at 1430 P.M. on 19 November 1958, Main Treasury Building

SUBJECT: Port Security - Proposed Visit of Soviet Research Vessel  
VITYAZ at San Francisco and Honolulu

Participants: James P. Hendrick, Assistant to Secretary of Treasury  
Mr. Frank Wideman, Treasury  
Captain G. B. Walsh, Coast Guard, Aide to Assistant  
Secretary of the Treasury  
Rear Admiral J. A. Hirschfield, Coast Guard  
Rear Admiral Alexander S. Hayward, Navy  
Captain W. C. Capron, Coast Guard  
Commander T. W. Joyce, Navy  
Rear Admiral Charles Pierce, Coast and Geodetic Survey  
Captain E. B. Roberts, Coast and Geodetic Survey  
Edmond J. Dorsey, State  
E. B. Houston, State  
Paul A. Smith, Jr., State  
CIA

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Security and Intelligence Collection Arrangements for the Anticipated  
Call of the Russian Research Vessel VITYAZ at San Francisco and Honolulu

The meeting was called to discuss the arrangements which were being made to provide for the physical inspection of the Russian research vessel VITYAZ during her anticipated calls at San Francisco and Honolulu, respectively, and for the exploitation, for intelligence purposes, of the vessel, its scientific equipment, and its operating and scientific personnel.

Mr. Hendrick opened the meeting by recalling that as per previous agreement, the Coast Guard has the responsibility for the covert surveillance of the VITYAZ both on land and on the sea. Captain Capron, USCG, reported that he and a Captain Sutter, also of USCG, had called on Admiral Pierce and Captain Roberts, both of the US Coast and Geodetic Survey, to enlist their technical aid in carrying out this surveillance. Since Captain Roberts' particular field of competence is different from that of the scientists on board the VITYAZ, it was decided to call on Dr. Stewart, an eminent oceanographer in the employ of the Coast and Geodetic Survey, to accompany the responsible Coast Guard personnel when they board the VITYAZ in San Francisco, to establish initial contact with the Russian scientists aboard. Since Coast and Geodetic Survey also have competent and knowledgeable oceanographers in their Honolulu offices, it is intended that one of these local scientists, probably a Captain Porter, would board the VITYAZ at her call there. However, no final

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arrangements have been made as yet on that point. Meanwhile, Captain Sutter has gone to San Francisco to discuss the impending call of the VITYAZ and the attendant security problems with the captain of the port, a Captain Mathieson (phonetic). As previously indicated (see Memorandum for the Record, 29 August 1958), the possibility of enlisting the cooperation of the San Francisco Police Department will also be discussed.

After Captain Capron finished his very detailed report, Commander Joyce, USN, speaking for the Navy, expressed the concern that in all the preparations thus far made, a very important point had not been covered, namely the danger of inadvertent disclosure of US classified information by indoctrinated personnel which might be in contact with the Russian scientists. He expressed the concern of the Department of Defense that all personnel participating in contacts with the Russians be properly briefed on the security aspect of their respective missions and recommended that overall coordination be established to ensure the conduct of appropriate briefings and indoctrinations. He also indicated that the Navy has reconsidered its earlier "hands-off" position with regard to the instant case and that the Navy Hydrographic Office now claims a predominant interest in the intelligence exploitation of both the VITYAZ herself and her contingent of scientific personnel. He stated, however, that Navy would not insist on exercising intelligence collection priority in this case, but would be satisfied as long as properly qualified personnel are used to do the job.

In this context the discussion subsequently turned tangentially to the problem of arranging for visits by the scientific contingent of the VITYAZ to various US installations in their respective fields of interest and to the security considerations engendered thereby. Mr. Paul Smith, Jr., of the State Department's office of Eastern European Affairs, was particularly interested in receiving guidance in this regard to permit him to reply to an inquiry by the Soviet Embassy.

It was decided, however, that the question of US contacts with the Russian scientists generally, and arrangements for their visits to US educational and scientific institutions, was more properly of concern to the Interagency Committee on Internal Security (ICIS) and would be taken up in that forum rather than in the Port Security Committee. Navy, however, indicated that it would be prepared to undertake the coordination of US contacts with the Russians, as well as the coordination of the intelligence exploitation effort attendant thereto.

Summarizing the consensus of opinion expressed by the participants, Mr. Hendrick stated that with due regard to the Navy position expressed by Commander Joyce, it seemed that the preparations being made jointly by the Coast Guard and the US Coast and Geodetic Survey would adequately cover the requirements of immediate concern to the Port Security Committee, and, in the absence of over-riding contrary considerations, he would recommend that they continue these preparations along the lines indicated. At the same time, he was pleased to note that the Department of the Navy would undertake the over-all coordination of the intelligence exploitation

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effort, which, while not of direct concern to the Port Security Committee was still, of course, a most important aspect of the case.

Everyone present concurred in these remarks.

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After the meeting, the CIA representative called [REDACTED] OSI, who is coordinating OSI intelligence requirements for this case, to suggest he talk to Commander Joyce to establish liaison with the Navy personnel who will coordinate the over-all intelligence requirements.

A copy of the list of the officers, crew, and scientific personnel aboard the VITYAZ, which had been submitted to the State Department by the Soviet Embassy, has been forwarded to SI/I/RS for further distribution.

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